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LETTER DATED 6 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF RWANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to inform you that since the start of the widespread army rebellion in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Government of Rwanda has been the subject of totally false and misleading allegations about its involvement in the rebellion.

In this regard, and on behalf of the Government of Rwanda, I would like to put on record that the Rwandan Government has absolutely nothing to do with the internal rebellion of the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These allegations are baseless and they lack any credibility. What is happening in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a purely internal matter, which the authorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are trying to externalize by looking for scapegoats, instead of finding appropriate ways of dealing with a rebellion that has spread quickly across the entire country.

The crumbling of the Cabinet of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as exemplified by the recent resignations of a number of Ministers and high ranking civil servants, coupled with the country-wide support for the rebellion, cannot be attributed in any way to the Rwandan Government. The authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also accused Rwandan troops of hijacking a civilian aircraft from the Goma airport in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and flying it to the military barracks of the Congolese army in the south-western town of Moanda, near the Atlantic Ocean. We would like to deny these allegations in the most categorical terms. They are untrue and incredible. If this were to be the case, why would the Rwandan troops take the aircraft from one point in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to another point in the same country rather than taking it to Rwanda?

Meanwhile, I would like to clarify that, indeed, there are Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese citizens in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in other parts of the country. These people are Congolese citizens, even if they happen to speak the same language as the one spoken in Rwanda. It is not the first time that, whenever political problems have arisen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in which Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese were involved together with other concerned Congolese, the Rwandan Government

has been blamed wrongly. We hope that the Democratic Republic of the Congo authorities and others will not continue to be confused about this situation.

The Government of Rwanda would like to reiterate that the current problems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are simply internal and that Rwanda is not involved in any way. Peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in the interests of Rwanda and the rest of the African countries. This is why it is important for the Security Council to urge the belligerents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to find a peaceful solution to their internal problem rather than being misled by the authorities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo into believing that there has been an external aggression.

The Rwandan Government wishes to reaffirm its respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its readiness to assist in initiatives to promote peace and stability in the Great Lakes Region.

I would kindly request you to circulate this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Gideon KAYINAMURA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Rwanda to the United Nations

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